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ABSTRACT

Using data collected at a Western State's press association convention, a study compared predicted motivation profiles for several newspaper management jobs to the actual profiles of men and women holding those jobs. In addition, the levels of job commitment and satisfaction were examined to learn how happy and dedicated the managers were. Approximately half (N=54) of the managers at the convention volunteered to write a five-minute essay in response to six pictures, and to complete a brief questionnaire that elicited demographic details and asked them to respond to a set of questions using a semantic differential scoring system designed to ascertain job satisfaction and commitment. Results showed that more than half of the subjects had a "good fit" between their actual individual needs and the needs likely to be fulfilled by their management jobs. Other findings showed that the older managers, those who had held their present jobs the longest and those who had worked in any management position the longest, were the most satisfied. No correlation was found for "good fit" and commitment. (HOD)

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MOTIVATIONAL PATTERNS OF NEWSPAPER MANAGERS:

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

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MOTIVATIONAL PATTERNS OF NEWSPAPER MANAGERS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

ABSTRACT

This research applies business management theory developed by David McClelland to the newspaper industry using a motivation/personality Thematic Apperception Test. The study compares predicted motivation levels for various job categories to actual motivation scores of newspaper managers.

The results indicate further research needs to be done to determine appropriate median measures with results varying from 25 to 34 matches between predicted and actual profiles depending upon the norms used. While the sample size and descriptive nature of the research allow no dramatic conclusions, initial results indicate publishers are no more likely than reporters to match their motivational profiles.

Job satisfaction and commitment are also examined in the management study. Results show that job satisfaction is significantly ($p < .05$) correlated with the number of years a manager has spent on the present job, or in a management position, and age. Job commitment is correlated iwth the number of years on the present job with those having the most years the most committed.

Several years ago it was popular for editors and other newspaper managers to proudly regard themselves as "seat of the pants" bosses who could write stories, lay-out ads and set type along the side of employees. However, increased competition, new technology and customer needs have altered the kinds of skills needed on newspapers today. We have learned that personality and motivation are as important to management as the ability to physically perform the necessary tasks. If a manager would rather work alone and is not motivated to lead others and the job calls for direction, delegation and coaching, then it would not be surprising to find low production, morale or other serious problems connected to that manager. An efficient and effective management team matches jobs to people who are able and want to do them.

This study compares predicted motivation profiles for several newspaper management jobs to the actual profiles of men and women holding those jobs. In addition, the levels of job commitment and satisfaction are examined to learn how happy and dedicated today's managers are.

Literature Review

Psychologist A. H. Maslow pointed out more than 30 years ago that most humans have a rank order priority of human needs, and until the most basic of these are fulfilled persons will not strive to meet higher goals or needs.[1] The identified needs are: (1) physiological; (2) safety, stability and security; (3) belongingness and love; (4) self-esteem and esteem of others; and (5) self-actualization, self-realization and self-accomplishment. These basic five needs have been analyzed in several ways as influential forces on human behavior.

Recent research has focused on the tie between one or more of the latter three needs and work motivations.[2] David McClelland[3] refined the theory and found that managers may have the following strong motivational needs for working: a Need for Affiliation (Naff); a Need for Achievement (Nach); and a Need for Power (Npwr).

A Naff might be described as concern for establishing, maintaining or restoring

positive relationships with another person. A person with this need might be described as one who seeks understanding by another or positive reactions from others.[4]

Nach is defined as competition with a standard of excellence when winning or doing as well or better than someone else is the major concern. A person with a high need for achievement also might have self-imposed requirements for good performance.[5]

The Npwr includes a desire to coach, influence, teach or encourage others to achieve with little interest in doing things alone. While good managers want and know how to exercise power. "On its own, however, power can lead to authoritarianism, so it needs to be tempered by maturity and a high degree of self-control."[6]

While all three needs could be important to managers[7] the literature suggests serious problems can occur when managers try to fulfill inappropriate dominant needs on the job.[8] When job incumbents do not have their motivational needs fulfilled by their occupations, they normally will not stay with those jobs more than two to five years.[9] In addition, they will show higher rates of absenteeism[10] as well as lower levels of job satisfaction and motivation.[11]

Specifically, the individual who is most concerned with personal achievement may have difficulty delegating, giving feedback, and guiding employees. Likewise, the manager who has a strong need to be liked or who wants to stay on good terms with everybody, is the one most apt to make exceptions for particular employees and appear uncertain or inconsistent.[12] Research shows that managers who are overly concerned about being liked tend to have subordinates who feel they have very little personal responsibility, that organizational procedures are not clear, and have little pride in their work group.[13]

From examination of the literature, it appears that "top level" managers should have a profile that includes a high need for institutional power. That is, the power need is not egotistical or related to positive self-image

and is tempered and controlled so that efforts are directed toward the benefit of the organization not the manager's personal aggrandizement. Such power motivated leaders make subordinates feel strong rather than weak. High morale is created because employees feel a sense of the organization and are clear about their roles and functions in the organization.[14] In addition, research shows that companies guided by managers with this profile have low turnover, high job satisfaction and commitment.[15]

Some writers since McClelland and his associates have linked his motivation theory to selected occupations, although not by empirical research.[16] The first researcher to apply this motivation theory to newspaper managers was Chusmir who suggested that managers should be measured for differences between what they "can do versus will do."[17]

His research focused on categorizing "Good Fits" between motivation needs of the job and the people filling them. He found that most newsroom writing jobs will best fit an individual with a relatively high need for power and a moderate need for achievement and affiliation. Like managing and executive editors, newspaper publishers and general managers are better off with a high need for power, a moderate need for achievement and a low need for affiliation. This motivation pattern is consistent with top-level executives in all industries.

As Chusmir and others point out, ideal motivation patterns for particular jobs differ. While photojournalists might have a dominant or high achievement motivation profile, if they become managers they must adjust their efforts to helping others achieve. New managers need help in understanding how their job focus and success measurements change. This can have profound implications for hiring and promoting managers.

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Many behavioral changes as well as attitude shifts can occur if managers recognize what their jobs require. However, managers should also realize for themselves as well as for those they plan to promote if their motivational needs cannot be adjusted to or met by their jobs they may encounter serious managing difficulties. For the person seeking job-related self-fulfillment, there is a strong sense of deprivation if opportunities to satisfy these needs are not provided.

Method

While the methodology for ascertaining motivational profiles has been developed, tested and validated by business research done by David McClelland, it has never been applied to the newspaper management field. This is the first study to test the theory on newspaper managers, thus exploratory research questions were used as a framework for developing directions for future research.

The following research questions were tested:

R_1 Will there be any significant difference between the projected motivation profiles for the jobs studied and the actual motivation profiles?

R_2 Will managers who have a "Good Fit" between projected motivation profiles and actual ones rate higher on the job satisfaction scale than others?

R_3 Will managers who have a "Good Fit" between projected motivation profile and actual ones rate higher on the job commitment scale than others?

This study seeks benchmark data for future research. For instance, differences between owner/publishers and publishers working for newspaper groups is of interest as are the differences between length of service on the job. Various demographics will be examined for direction and clarification.

The Sample and Testing Procedure

In the spring of 1984 managers attending a western state's press

association convention were invited to participate in motivation testing. Although the association lists some 154 separate newspaper members, there are only 75 actual owners or groups in the state. Out of the total members, 127 are weeklies and 27 are dailies. The convention registered some 100 newspaper managers.

Approximately half (N=54) of the managers at the convention volunteered for one of three separate testing sessions where there was no variance in instruction, timing, or environmental conditions. Once the testing began, no one was allowed into the room until all procedures were completed.

Six pictures developed by McClelland as a Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) of managerial motivations were used in the study. Respondents looked at each picture for 10-15 seconds and then wrote five minute essays about what was happening, who the people were, what led up to the situation depicted, what had happened in the past, what was being thought or wanted by whom and what would happen and be done about it.

The scoring of the essays was completed by the author of this paper who has been trained in the procedure and is experienced in the technique. Basically a systematic search for words, phrases and content that conform to the management definitions of Naff, Nach, and Npwr is done.[18]

Although some writers[19] have questioned the reliability of the TAT as a motivation instrument, others[20] offer substantial defense, and contend that it is superior to self-report tests. It remains the most acceptable and popular measurement device used for this research.

After the essays were written, the respondents were asked to fill out a brief questionnaire that collected demographics and asked them to respond to a set of questions using a semantic differential scoring system designed to ascertain job satisfaction and commitment. Four separate questions

determined satisfaction levels with 28 the maximum possible score. Six questions determined commitment to job with 24 points possible and six representing the maximum positive commitment score possible.

Analysis and Results

The predicted motivational profiles for various newspaper jobs calculated by Chusmir were used as a "reliable given" in the study. They were developed by studying the U.S. Department of Labor's Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT) which lists some 20,000 jobs including those in the newspaper industry. Chusmir distinguishes between what people "can do" versus what they "will do." The "can do" variables include motor and sensory skills, job knowledge, problem solving abilities and health variables. The "will do" variables include personality and interests and motivation. It is the "will do" requirements that are measured in the TAT tests. To develop a predicted need profile for each job, Chusmir examined the middle three DOT digits out of the nine digit code used. The three digits indicate the rating given by the Department of Labor researchers for each of three basic functions performed by workers and describe how and to what degree workers relate to data, people and things. These projected functions were translated into the three work motivation needs (affiliation, achievement, power).[21]

As recommended by prior research, the sample medians were calculated for each of the three needs tested by the TAT. The TAT raw scores for Nach ranged from -3 to 17 with the median score 3.83. Naff ranged from 0-15 with the median score 4.16 and Npwr had a range of 0-19 with the median score 6.16. Sample (N=54) means were also calculated for the job satisfaction and commitment questions. Those with high satisfaction and commitment were defined as those with mean scores equal to or greater than the sample means of 21.5 for satisfaction and 12.8 for commitment.

Results

Six DOT categories were represented in the sample with nearly two-thirds of the respondents publishers, general managers, or managers of advertising, circulation, classified or production departments (See Table I). Another 22 percent were executive editors or managing editors. Some 57 percent of the managers were working on small (0-4, 999) circulation newspapers with 61 percent employed by weeklies. Thirty-five of the respondents were men and 19 were women with the mean age 37. Some 76 percent of the respondents hold bachelor or advanced college degrees.

R_1 Will there be any significant difference between the projected motivation profiles for the jobs studied and the actual motivation profiles?

In order to answer this research question, respondents median TAT scores were compared with predicted DOT motivational profiles. If the respondent's median score was equal to or greater than the sample median for each of the three needs, it was considered a "high" or prominent need. A "Good Fit" occurred if the respondent had a "high" score on the predicted one or had at least a "high" need for one of the two predicted needs when two were predicted. Using this procedure 25 respondents had "Good Fits" and 29 did not.

Because the sample is small, and it was thought that this might artificially affect the median scores, a check was made against the national norms set in studies of managers from other industries.[22] Since a check of the six DOT categories indicated only Nach and Npwr were important to the study, only those two areas were used in further analysis. National norms indicated that the median score for Nach was 6.0 compared to 3.8 for the sample and the Npwr median nationally was 4.7 compared to 6.1 for the sample.

Since many of the publishers and the general managers were owners (N-21), they were separated into an entrepreneur DOT category. Prior research by Chusmir had indicated a different predicted motivational profile was appropriate for publishers or general managers who were owners. Entrepreneurs have a predicted "high" need for achievement compared to non-owners in that category who have a "high" need for power.

Table II shows that when these shifts to national norms and the entrepreneur category were made 34 of the 54 subjects had a "good fit" between their actual individual needs and the needs likely to be fulfilled by their management jobs; 20 had a "bad fit" ($Z=3.87$, $p<.01$). These results tend to confirm the accuracy of the scoring system to predict level of actual need requirements of newspaper managers. A Chi Square analysis of job categories indicated there was no significant difference between those with good and bad fits with publishers no more likely than reporters to be well suited to their projected motivation needs.

R_2 Will managers who have a "Good Fit" between projected motivation profiles and actual ones rate higher on the job satisfaction scale than others?

A four question set designed to test job satisfaction allowed respondents to indicate on a seven point scale their levels of satisfaction with a maximum score of 28 possible. The mean satisfaction score for the 54 respondents was 21.5. When good fit and satisfaction levels were tested, no significant correlation was found (See Table III). Some 48 percent of the subjects confirmed the expected outcome of job satisfaction being related to good job fit. (See Table IV).

Other findings showed that three variables were significantly related ($p<.05$) to job satisfaction: years in the present job; years in any professional job; and age of respondent. The older managers, those who had

held their present jobs the longest and those who had worked in any management job longest were the most satisfied.

R_3 Will managers who have a 'Good Fit" between projected motivation profiles and actual ones rate higher on the job commitment scale than others?

A six question set determined respondent job commitment with a four item semantic differential scoring system. Twenty-four was the maximum possible score with six indicating total commitment. The mean score for the sample was 12.8.

No correlation was found for "Good Fit" and commitment with 46 percent confirming the expected outcome (see Table IV). However, a pearson correlation coefficient of -.24 ($p < .05$) was significant for years on the present job and job commitment. The longer people had spent on their present jobs the more committed they were. (See Table III).

Conclusions

While the results of this study are only exploratory, some important new directions for newspaper management research have been indicated. For instance, the TAT test is not a difficult or cumbersome instrument to administer. While it does require 30 minutes to complete, no respondents complained about the time and many volunteered the observation that it was not difficult and "even fun" to do. Because newspaper employees are familiar with writing it may be a particularly suitable test for measuring a variable like motivation that involves something more sophisticated than self report or self analysis data. The drawbacks of the test involve the complicated scoring procedure. It must be analyzed by trained researchers, and the procedure is not easy or quick to learn. Unless future researchers are interested in devoting time to studying the theory and method the expansion of the technique is limited.

Although the work of calculating predicted DOT motivation scores has already been accomplished by Chusmir, several questions still remain about choosing suitable norms for meeting the predicted motivation scores. For instance, when Npwr was analyzed the sample median was much higher (6.0) than the national norm (4.7). Likewise, there was a considerable difference between the sample median for Nach (3.83) and the national norm (6.0).

It's difficult to justify using the sample median when only 54 cases have been examined, however it is equally questionable to use national norms for managers from non newspaper businesses. Obviously more newspaper managers need to be tested to stabilize the median and one would suspect that there might be major differences if samples emphasized dailies rather than the weeklies prevalent in this study.

The high sample median for power is an interesting finding. One might speculate that newspaper employees in general are more likely to feel stronger power needs than non newspaper managers. That is, since newspaper employees (and particularly since this sample was heavily populated with publishers) historically and regularly may feel they 'influence, teach or lead' the general population through news stories and editorials, the power need may be more strongly and aggressively expressed than for other industry managers.

Until more testing is done, it is not possible to know if the medians used in this study are reliable or merely peculiar to this particular sample. Because of the tentative nature of the research not much can be concluded from the finding that there was no significant difference between the predicted and actual motivation scores for the various DOT categories. It is important to note, however that several changes in the "Good Fit" category occurred when different median norms were used and when publisher/owners were separated from non owners. The numbers of "Good Fit" managers grew from 25 to 34 with the changes.

When norms are stabilized and reliable, hiring and promoting could become less of a guessing game for management positions. If particular jobs were identified in terms of not only skills needed but also in terms of recommended motivation satisfaction connected, much better matches might be made.

The study also provides confirmation that the longer a person holds her/his job the more satisfied she/he is with it. In addition, the older managers tend to be more satisfied with their jobs. In terms of commitment, the longer a person holds her/his job the more committed she/he is to it. While this is certainly not an astounding finding, it does strengthen the argument for nurturing and encouraging managers through the early entry years. More research needs to be done, however to determine what other factors might be contributing to this finding.

And finally, while no concrete connections between predicted need fit and job satisfaction and commitment were found, the authors feel more study is needed before it can be concluded there is no connection. Since the sample is so largely small circulation/weekly oriented, it may be that the respondents in this study have great flexibility in choosing their chores or emphasizing certain aspects of their jobs. That is, their titles may not be reflective of the actual job tasks they perform. While titles on larger daily papers are fairly standarized with particular tasks assigned to the job titles, smaller papers may not be so standarized with managers shifting to the areas they like best regardless of their title. It may be that the people with poor job fits are not performing the tasks traditionally assigned to their job titles which could account for their relative satisfaction.

Research should also continue in trying to discover why job commitment is so low for the sample. Overall 57 percent of the subjects have low job commitment with 59 percent of those with good job fit having low job

commitment. Job commitment may be low in the business in general or a multitude of other explanations are possible, however it is a finding worth exploring and studying.

FOOTNOTES

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2. Clayton P. Alderfer, Existence, Relatedness and Growth: Human Needs in Organizational Settings (New York, N.Y.: Free Press, 1972); and David A. Nadler, J. Richard Hackman, and Edward E. Lawler, III, "Understanding Individual Behavior in Organizations," in Schlesinger et al (Eds.) Managing Behavior in Organizations, (New York, N.Y.: McGraw Hill, 1983).

3. See for instance, David C. McClelland, The Achieving Society (Princeton, N.J.: D. Van Nostrand Co., Inc., 1961) and David McClelland and David H. Burnham, "Power is the Great Motivator," Harvard Business Review, (March/April 1976) pp. 100-107.

4. John W. Atkinson, Motives in Fantasy, Action, and Society (Princeton, N.J.: D. Van Nostrand Co., Inc., 1958), pp. 205-211.

5. Ibid. pp. 181-182.

6. McClelland and Burnham, p. 100.

7. David C. McClelland and Richard E. Boyatzis, "Leadership Motive Pattern and Long-Term Success in Management," Journal of Applied Psychology, (1982), pp. 737-743; David G. Winter, The Power Motive, (New York, N.Y.: The Free Press, 1973); and S. Singh and I. Jaiswal, "Achievement Motivation and Risk Taking Among Small Scale Entrepreneurs, Asian Journal of Psychology and Education (Vol. 2, 1977) pp. 14-17.

8. R. R. Sims, "Assessing Competencies in Experiential Learning Theory: A Person-Job Congruence Model of Effectiveness in Professional Careers," Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Case Western Reserve University, 1981; and R. R. Sims, "Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory: A Framework for Assessing Person-Job Interaction," The Academy of Management Review, (Vol. 8, 1983) pp. 501-508 and David Nadler, J. Hackman and Edward Lawler, III, Managing Organizational Behavior, (New York, N.Y.: Little Brown and Company, 1979).

9. Winter, 1973.

10. Edward E. Lawler III, Motivation in Work Organizations, (Monterey, Ca.: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1973).

11. Nadler, Hackman and Lawler, 1979 and Sims 1981.

12. McClelland and Burnham, p. 103.

13. Ibid. p. 104.

14. Winter, 1973; McClelland and Boyatzis, 1982.

15. McClelland and Burnham, pp. 104-107.

16. J.C. Lafferty, Human Synergistics, Inc., Plymouth, Mass., 1982; J. B. Ritchie and P. Thompson, Organization and People (Instructor's Manual), (St. Paul, Minn.: West Publishing Co., 1980), p. 110 and J. R. Schermerhorn, Jr., J.G. Hunt and R. N. Osborn, Managing Organization Behavior, (New York, N.Y.: John Wiley and Sons, 1982).

17. L. H. Chusmir, "Profile of Motivational Needs of Individuals in the Newspaper Industry," Newspaper Research Journal 5 (Fall, 1983), pp. 33-41.

18. For a complete discussion of the TAT test and scoring see for instance, David C. McClelland, The Achieving Society; John Atkinson, Motives in Fantasy...; and David McClelland, John Atkinson, Russell Clark, Edgar Lowell, The Achievement Motive (New York, N.Y.: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1953).

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21. Chusmir's scoring system is divided into three sections, one for each worker function of relationship to data, people or things. Each section has numbers which correspond to the middle three digits of the DOT. The first of the middle three DOT digits refers to section one of the scoring system, the second digit to the second section, etc. Each number in each section matches up a specified level of nAch., nAff., or nPwr. A final motivation profile is obtained by adding up the levels of each of the three needs found in the three separate sections of the scoring system. See Chusmir for details in the scoring procedures.

22. The national norms for the TAT version called "Picture Story Exercise," used in this study may be obtained from: McBer and Company, 137 Newbury Street, Boston, Mass. 02116.

TABLE I

DEMOGRAPHICS OF SAMPLE

(N=54)

Circulation	Percentage
0-4,999	57 percent
5-9,999	17
10-24,999	11
25-49,999	4
50-99,999	4
100,000 plus	4
Types of Papers Represented	
Daily	33 percent
Weekly	61
BiWeekly or Other	6
Departments	
Advertising	13 percent
Editorial	28
General Business	32
Combination of Several Departments	28
Sex	
Male	65 percent
Female	35

*Due to rounding to next whole number some percentages don't total 100 percent.

TABLE II

PREDICTED MOTIVATION SCORES BY POSITION OF SUBJECT

(N=54)

Positions	Predicted Motivation	Number of Individuals Whose Need Requirement (TAT) Agrees With Occupational Need Fulfillment	
		Yes	No
Columnist, Critic, Editorial Writer	Bal. Ach./Pow.	2	0
Newswriter/Reporter	Power	3	0
Managing Editor/ Executive Editor	Power	9	4
City Editor, Dept. Editor, Metro Ed., State Ed.	Bal. Ach./Pow.	2	0
Publisher/General Manager	Power	3	2
Entrepreneur	Achievement	8	11
Managers: ad, Circ. etc.	Power	7	3
TOTAL:		34*	20

*$p < .01$

TABLE III

SATISFACTION AND COMMITMENT TO JOB FINDING

Demographics	Satisfaction	Commitment
Years on the Job	.22*	-.24*
Number of Years a Manager/Professional	.24*	-.14
Age	.3[illegible]*	-.08
Circulation of Paper	0	.19
DOT Good Fit	-.08	-.06
Sex	.10	-.10
Type of Paper (Daily/Weekly, etc.)	.09	-.01

*$p < .05$

TABLE IV

NEED FIT AND JOB SATISFACTION AND COMMITMENT RELATIONSHIPS

N=54

		SATISFACTION		
		HIGH	LOW	DIFFERENCE
FIT	GOOD	17	17	0
	BAD	11	9	+2

Sujmary of Combinations which tend to confirm good fit/job satisfaction:

High Satisfaction/good fit	= 17	
Low Satisfaction/bad fit	= 9	26 confirm (48%)

Summary of Combinations which tend to deny good fit/job satisfaction:

High Satisfaction/bad fit	= 11	
Low Satisfaction/bad fit	= 9	20 deny (37%)

		COMMITMENT		
		HIGH	LOW	DIFFERENCE
FIT	GOOD	14	20	-6
	BAD	9	11	-2

Summary of Combinations which tend to confirm good fit/job commitment:

High Commitment/good fit	= 14	
Low Commitment/bad fit	= 11	25 confirm (46%)

Summary of Combinations which tend to deny good fit/job commitment:

High Commitment/bad fit	= 9	
Low Commitment/bad fit	- 11	20 deny (37%)

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